



The Hybrid Vehicle and Alternative Fuel Report

September 30, 2015

The fine print: This report is a summary of articles appearing in popular, business, and technical media referring to the impact of fuel costs and fuel efficiency on vehicle technology, development, and markets. At the end of the report is a list of all articles summarized, with hyperlinks to internet sources where available. Some articles may require free registration or paid subscriptions to access. *The Hybrid Vehicle and Alternative Fuel Report* (ISSN: 1946-1011) is compiled, written, and edited by Thomas L. R. Smith, Ph. D., Economic Analysis Branch of the Budget and Financial Analysis Division, Washington State Department of Transportation. Contact *The Hybrid Vehicle and Alternative Fuel Report's* editor at smithtm@wsdot.wa.gov or (360) 705-7941. Contributions of news items, original articles, positive comments about *The Report*, and cookies are welcome. Please send cookies. And not the computer kind.

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HYBRIDS

The city of Los Angeles will lease 128 plug-in hybrid vehicles and 160 battery electric vehicles, *Los Angeles Times* (Mejia, September 11, 2015) tells. The Department of Water and Power and the General Services Department will use the hybrids, while the Police and Fire Departments, as well as several other agencies, will use the fully electric vehicles. The Police Department will have at least one Tesla and one BMW i3.

Just south of Los Angeles, the City of Long Beach believes it can save \$100,000 per year in fuel costs by assigning police commanders and detectives Ford Focus hybrids to replace Crown Victorias, *Green Fleet* (Clinton, September 16, 2015) floats. Long Beach has three of the hybrids it plans to rotate through the Police Department for testing.

UPS ordered 125 hybrid delivery trucks *Logistics Management* (Berman, September 18, 2015) delivered. The trucks, made by Cincinnati's Workhorse Group get four times the fuel economy as gasoline trucks.

Edinburgh, Scotland, will put hybrid buses on the bus routes with the worst pollution levels, the *Edinburgh Evening News* (September 24, 2015) notes. The 25 buses should cut Lothian Buses, Edinburgh's transit company, diesel consumption by 40%. The buses will run in electric-only mode on the most polluted parts of the bus routes.

You cannot buy a hybrid Honda Fit in the United States. Honda only sells the car in Japan. The question arose, recently, if one desired, could one go to Japan, buy a Honda Fit, and then ship it to the United States. *Green Car Reports* (Voelcker, September 25,

2015) says, “No.” *Green Car Reports* actually says more than that. Don’t even think about it. U.S. law prohibits importing a new car that does not meet EPA emissions standards or comply with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards. Japanese cars built for the Japanese market are very different from the ones built for the U.S. For one, Japanese cars are built with right-hand drive. Lighting and other safety requirements are also very different. If such a car shows up in a U.S. port, the owner can either bring the car into compliance at the port, or have the car crushed. Bringing a car into compliance can cost “hundreds of thousands of dollars.” Honda says it has no plans to sell the hybrid Fit in the United States anytime soon. If you are willing to wait, you can import a used car that’s more than 25 years old that does not meet federal standards.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Porsche introduced the Mission E electric car at the Frankfurt Auto show, [CNN Money](#) (September 15, 2015) mused. This is Porsche’s first entry into the electric car market, but it won’t be ready for a few years. Porsche’s planners expect the vehicle to go 250 miles after a 15 minute charge. Audi also showed off a new electric SUV that gets the same mileage as the Porsche. Audi says their car will be available in 2018. The Porsche and Audi cars are billed as “Tesla-fighters.” *Hybrid Report* subscriber Doug McClanahan provided the link to this article.

Mercedes-Benz also plans a Tesla-fighter, [Automotive News Europe](#) (Wilson, September 16, 2015) says. The new Mercedes electric will have a 250 mile range and is expected on the road around 2018. Mercedes already has three electric cars on the market, but Mercedes says this one is “something different.”

The National Drive Electric week event in Steilacoom, Washington, on September 13 was a success. Organizer Dick Muri¹ reports that participating electric cars increased from 19 electric cars in 2014 to 31 this year. Eighteen of the participating cars were Nissan Leafs with the Tesla Model S taking a distant second with 4 cars. Three cars tied for third with 2 each: the plug-in hybrid Volt, the Ford Focus Electric, and the Zero Motorcycle. Tied for sixth place, with 1 each, was the BMW i3, Mitsubishi i-MiEV, and the Tesla Roadster.

Magyar Posta, Hungary’s postal service, is testing a variety of electric vehicles, the [Budapest Business Journal](#) (September 25, 2015) journaled. The post office began testing the vehicles in August and will continue tests until January. The post office is considering the vehicles for the most densely populated areas, which also have the highest pollution levels.

¹ And Hybrid Report Subscriber and State Representative.

“Into each life some rain must fall.”² Electric motorcycle maker Mission Motorcycles has filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy and is no longer in business, *Auto Blog* (Yoney, September 14, 2015) blogged. The company tried to restructure last year and tried to deliver the record-setting bike to customers, but failed. Rather than building motorcycles for sale, the motorcycle became a sales tool to get jobs for Mission’s design team. That did not work, either, so one more electric vehicle maker is, in the words of Lefty Frizzell, “Gone, Gone, Gone.”³

According to anonymous sources, Apple⁴ plans to ship an electric car by 2019, *The Wall Street Journal* (Wakabayashi, September 21, 2015) journaled. The unnamed sources who are, *The Journal* claims, “familiar with the matter” say that Apple’s 600 person team working on the electric car will be tripled. It is unclear, at the moment, if Apple plans to build the car itself or contract it out. *The Journal* also says that for Apple, a ship date does not necessarily mean a date a product is shipped to customers, but a date the engineering people ship a product to testers.

ALTERNATIVE FUELS

DHL Express’s US fleet is mostly made up of alternative fuel vehicles, *Green Fleet* (September 17, 2015) fields. About 75% of its 3,100 vehicle fleet is some sort of alternative fuel-efficient vehicle. Half of the vehicles the company plans to buy this year will also be alternative fuel. DHL’s fleet has 500 propane, 92 electric, 54 hybrid, 425 clean diesel, and 70 high-efficiency compact vehicles.

COMING TO A LOCATION NEAR YOU: The latest news on new charging stations which may or may not be somewhere close to you.

United States: There is a new fast charger at Baltimore’s City Hall, *The Baltimore Sun* (Broadwater, September 16, 2015) shines. While Baltimore has 20 charging stations in city garages, this is the first publicly owned fast charger.

Twenty-eight public charging stations are going up around Jacksonville, Florida, *The Florida Times-Union* (Scanlan, D. September 18, 2015) unfolds. The ChargeWell network, financed by North Florida TPO, consist of level two chargers.

There is a new charging station in Salisbury, North Carolina, the *Salisbury Post* (Bergeron, September 20, 2015) staked. The new charger is a joint effort between Nissan

² Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, “The Rainy Day,” *Ballads and Other Poems*, Cambridge, MA: John Owen, 1842. Or, as Elmer Bernstein and Ernie Sheldon put it, “Baby the Rain Must Fall,” performed by Glenn Yarbrough, RCA Victor, 1965.

³ Harlan Howard, “She’s Gone Gone Gone,” Columbia Records, 1965.

⁴ In the interest of full disclosure, the Editor owns Apple stock. And an iPhone, iPad, and Macbook. He has no plans to buy an iCar.

and Brightfield Transportation and is located downtown behind Nashville Nights, a country and bluegrass club.

“*Here comes the sun:*”⁵ Nashville International Airport is installing solar-powered charging stations, *The Tennessean* (McGee, September 23, 2015) volunteers. The chargers will be available beginning September 24.

Downtown Vancouver, Washington, just received two new level two and a quick charger, *The Columbian* (September 24, 2015) said. Clark (County) Public Utilities also installed two level two chargers at its office in The Orchards. The level two chargers are part of the Blink system, but the quick charger is owned by Clark Public Utilities.

Asnuntuck Community College in Enfield, Connecticut, opened a level 2 GE car charger on its campus, Springfield, Massachusetts’ *The Republican* (September 25, 2015) reported. The charger is free.

The fast chargers that were slated to open this summer on the New York State Thruway will not open until the end of the year, the Lower Hudson’s *The Journal-News* (Saeed, September 27, 2015) says. On the other hand, level 2 chargers opened at three commuter train stations in the area. Cortlandt and Beacon on the Hudson Line and Southeast station on the Harlem Line each opened charging stations.

Around the World: Tesla has four superchargers in Australia, the *Daily Mail Australia* (Bhole, September 4, 2015) posts. The newest is in Sydney, while there is one in Pyrmont, Melbourne, and Goulbourne. Tesla plans to install another fifteen chargers in southeastern Australia and one on Tasmania.

OTHER TECHNOLOGY

There is nothing new under the sun.⁶

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⁵ George Harrison, “Here Comes the Sun,” *Abbey Road*, Apple Records, 1969.

⁶ Ecclesiastes 1:9.

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That is all.